



WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

**DAVE HANSEN**

SENATOR — 30TH DISTRICT

ASSISTANT MAJORITY LEADER

**TESTIMONY: SENATE BILL 614**  
**SENATE TRANSPORTATION, TOURISM, FORESTRY, and NATURAL RESOURCES**  
**COMMITTEE**  
**4/1/10**

Chairman Holperin, members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today in support of Senate Bill 614. This bill would make it easier for property owners in my district and on the bay of Green Bay as well as Lake Michigan and Lake Superior to remove an extremely troublesome and invasive plant called phragmites.

Over the past several years, after having this issue brought to our attention, Representative Nygren and I have been working to find a resolution to what can best be described a rapidly growing problem.

Phragmites are extremely problematic and have virtually taken over the shores of Green Bay along my district. As you will hear from some of my constituents who are here today, phragmites are a major source of concern with respect to its impact on the local environment and native plants and habitat, property values and the ability of area residents and homeowners to enjoy the Bay.

As you will hear, phragmites also present a significant fire danger in the areas where they exist.

In the past Rep. Nygren and I worked with staff and officials from the DNR to make changes to the General Permit process that we hoped would resolve the concerns of our constituents with respect to their ability to remove these plants. Unfortunately, many of our constituents did not find the changes all that helpful and requested that a legislative solution be pursued to resolve this problem.

The result of this effort is the bill that is before you.

- SB-614 is a straightforward bill that exempts the use of motor vehicles on lakebeds for the sole purpose of removing phragmites so long as the following conditions are met:
- The operation of the motor vehicle is for the purpose of mowing or applying an herbicide for the purpose of controlling Phragmites australis.
- The operation of the motor vehicle occurs only on the exposed bed of the outlying water and only when the exposed bed is dry.
- The operation of the motor vehicle occurs between the period beginning on August 1 of a given year and ending on March 15 of the following year.
- The mowing or application of the herbicide interferes with or destroys native species only to the degree that is necessary to control the invasive species Phragmites australis.

While I understand there are those on both sides of this issue who may have concerns with this bill I believe it is a reasonable compromise that represents our best chance to provide relief to the people and communities who have to deal with this problem year after year.

Thank you.

**Committees**

Joint Committee on Finance, Senate Vice Chair  
Education  
Transportation, Tourism, Forestry and Natural Resources  
Special Committee on State-Tribal Relations  
Senate Organization  
Joint Committee on Legislative Organization

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